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UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

Report of the Trade and Development Board on its fourteenth executive session

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on 24 March 1997

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CONTENTS

Chapter		Paragraphs
	INTRODUCTION	1
I.	ISSUES ARISING IN THE WAKE OF THE WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE FOR ANALYSIS IN UNCTAD FROM A DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE (agenda item 2)	2 - 34
II.	COORDINATION AND COOPERATION BETWEEN UNCTAD AND RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (agenda item 3)	35 - 47
III.	TECHNICAL COOPERATION (agenda item 4)	48 - 60
	(a) STRATEGY FOR UNCTAD	
	(b) 1997-1999 PLAN FOR TECHNICAL COOPERATION	
IV.	PROGRESS REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE SECRETARIAT TASK FORCE ON PUBLICATIONS POLICY	61 - 68
V.	REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT ON HIS CONSULTATIONS DESIGNED TO IMPROVE THE WAY THE BOARD ADDRESSES THE ISSUE OF INTERDEPENDENCE, INCLUDING LDCs AND UN-NADAF (agenda item 6)	
	and	
	PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FORTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE BOARD (agenda item 7)	69 - 98
VI.	OTHER BUSINESS (agenda item 8)	99 - 105
	(a) Progress in the reorganization of the UNCTAD secretariat	99 - 103
	(b) Membership of the Working Party 1997	104 - 105
VII.	ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS	106 - 109
	A. Opening of the session	106
	B. Bureau of the fourteenth executive session . .	107
	C. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)	108
	D. Report of the Board on its fourteenth executive session (agenda item 9)	109

ANNEXES

Annex	
I.	Agenda for the fourteenth executive session
II.	Provisional agenda for the fifteenth executive session of the Board
III.	Provisional agenda for the forty-fourth session of the Board
IV.	Membership and attendance

INTRODUCTION

1. The fourteenth executive session of the Trade and Development Board was held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on 24 March 1997. The executive session consisted of two meetings - the 882nd and 883rd plenary meetings of the Board. The agenda of the fourteenth executive session is reproduced in annex I below.

Chapter I

ISSUES ARISING IN THE WAKE OF THE WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE FOR ANALYSIS IN UNCTAD FROM A DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

(Agenda item 2)

2. In connection with this item, the secretariat made available the following documents:

- Singapore Ministerial Declaration, adopted on 13 December 1996 (WTO document WT/MIN(96)/DEC).

- "High-level Meeting on Integrated Initiatives for Least Developed Countries' Trade Development" - Informal note by the ITC, UNCTAD and WTO secretariats (circulated in English only).

3. The **Secretary-General of UNCTAD** noted that the decisions adopted at the WTO Ministerial Conference in Singapore, in particular those where UNCTAD was specifically mentioned, had implications for UNCTAD's future work. The areas concerned related to: the agreement on a Plan of Action in favour of the least developed countries and on organizing a meeting with UNCTAD and ITC in 1997 with the participation of aid agencies, multilateral financial institutions and the LDCs, to foster an integrated approach to assisting these countries in enhancing their trading opportunities; and the establishment of two working groups, one to examine the relationship between trade and investment, and the other to study issues raised by members relating to the interaction between trade and competition policy. It had also been agreed that these two working groups would draw upon each other's work, as well as draw upon, and be without prejudice to, the work of UNCTAD and other appropriate intergovernmental fora in these areas. Ministers had also welcomed UNCTAD's current work in these areas and the contribution it could make to the understanding of the issues dealt with by the working groups, and they had encouraged cooperation with UNCTAD and other appropriate organizations to make best use of resources and to ensure that the development dimension was fully taken into account.

4. Regarding the working groups, there were two interlinking issues to consider. The first concerned the focus of UNCTAD's future work in the areas concerned, with a view to achieving greater complementarity between the work of UNCTAD and that of WTO. At this stage, as the working groups had not yet agreed upon their respective work programmes, it was difficult for the UNCTAD secretariat to identify with clarity the adjustments it might need to make in light of the work that would be undertaken by the two working groups in WTO. He observed, however, that UNCTAD's work programme in this area was autonomous and was based on the Midrand Declaration and the decisions of the relevant Commissions.

5. The second issue concerned cooperation between WTO and UNCTAD. At the intergovernmental level, UNCTAD's role *vis-à-vis* the working groups would need to be defined, presumably when the work programme of those groups was agreed upon. At the secretariat level, it had not been possible as yet for the Secretary-General of UNCTAD and the Director-General of WTO to meet and discuss the *modus operandi* of cooperation between the two secretariats, with a view to ensuring that the development dimension was fully taken into account

in the conduct of the work of the working groups, and that best use would be made of available resources. Such a meeting was scheduled to take place in early April 1997, when the issue of cooperation between the two organizations, in particular as regards the work to be undertaken by the working groups established in WTO, would be discussed.

6. On the High-level Meeting on Integrated Initiatives for Least Developed Countries' Trade Development, he stated that, in pursuance of the decision taken by the Ministers in Singapore, the question of the High-level Meeting had been discussed informally among governments and UNCTAD, WTO and ITC. The informal note based on these discussions attempted to identify the specific objectives and the preliminary agenda of the High-level Meeting. It also addressed related organizational matters. The executive session provided an opportunity for the Board to address the broad range of issues relating to the High-level Meeting from the perspective of UNCTAD. The High-level Meeting would itself offer an important opportunity to launch new initiatives to tackle trade and trade-related problems facing LDCs in an integrated and coherent fashion. It was essential to involve LDCs' development partners, in particular the Bretton Woods Institutions, in the preparations for, and outcome of, the Meeting.

7. It was likely that discussions at the High-level Meeting would focus on two main issues: market access and a programme of integrated trade-related technical cooperation within a coherent policy framework. However, the agenda of the Meeting had by no means been finalized. Contributions from the Board on issues falling within the objectives of the Meeting, as well as the respective emphasis and weight to be attached to each, would help in arriving at an agreed agenda no later than April. An agreed agenda would clearly help in the preparations at the national level for the High-level Meeting.

8. Referring to the issue of enhanced market access, he recalled that the WTO Plan of Action for LDCs recommended that the developed countries and the more advanced developing countries enhance market access to LDCs on an autonomous basis.

9. As for technical cooperation programmes, he believed that such programmes should be directed at easing the supply-side constraints of LDCs in order to unlock their development potential and emphasize capacity-building. An integral component of this would be to increase the transfer of technical know-how and investment to LDCs. The High-level Meeting would need to decide on the design and implementation of a Pilot Technical Cooperation Programme, drawing and building upon experience gained from the WTO/UNCTAD/ITC Integrated Technical Assistance Programme for selected African countries, including four LDCs. The active participation of LDCs' development partners in this decision - in particular the World Bank, IMF and UNDP - would ensure policy coherence in trade and trade-related development assistance to LDCs. The issue of policy coherence was of crucial importance if LDCs were to derive maximum benefits from the efforts of the international community. Coherence of Fund/Bank policies with the commitments of LDCs as WTO members would increase the complementarity and synergy of trade and trade-related policies, and significantly enhance the net benefits accruing to LDCs from these policies. It would also ensure that LDCs utilize the Special and Differential measures of the Marrakesh Declaration to restructure their economies in an orderly fashion in order to withstand competition in the global market place.

10. The representative of **Morocco**, referring to the cooperation between UNCTAD and the WTO and the working groups to be established in the WTO on investment and competition policy, pointed out that these issues had been studied at length in UNCTAD. Therefore, it was necessary to consider in what manner UNCTAD could best contribute to the deliberations of these working groups. Concerning the High-level Meeting on LDCs initiated at the Ministerial Conference of the WTO, Morocco considered that this initiative was one on which UNCTAD, WTO and ITC could cooperate in a meaningful manner. But he felt that the agenda, the elements of the work and the objectives of the Meeting, as derived from the Plan of Action for the LDCs, should be narrow, focusing on practical work and aiming to achieve feasible results.

11. The representative of **The Netherlands**, speaking on behalf of the **European Union**, said that the Union considered that the work being undertaken in WTO and in UNCTAD - or, for that matter, in any other international organizations - should be mutually reinforcing and complementary. She noted the apparent willingness, in both WTO and UNCTAD, to work together in order to achieve the common goals of dealing in a transparent and effective way with the challenges of globalization and liberalization of the world economy. An example of this spirit of cooperation could be seen in the discussions on the relationship between trade, environment and development, which would feed constructively into the ongoing debate on trade and environment in the WTO. A further example, deriving directly from the Singapore Ministerial Declaration, was the forthcoming High-level Meeting on LDCs, to be jointly organized by WTO, UNCTAD and ITC, and with UNDP and the Bretton Woods Institutions as co-organizers. The European Union attached great importance to this Meeting, which aimed at increasing market access and at promoting a coherent and integrated international approach to trade-related problems of LDCs, *inter alia* by ensuring coherence and consistency of policy advice to, and technical cooperation with, these countries. It was important to agree on a clear timetable and an institutional mechanism for organizing the High-level Meeting. The secretariats of UNCTAD, WTO and ITC were already working closely together, and in this context account should be taken of work carried out in other organizations.

12. Finally, she said that, in the wake of the WTO Conference, the investment issue should remain high on the UNCTAD agenda. On this subject, UNCTAD could and should play a necessary role and provide an indispensable platform in order to ensure that also as far as investment was concerned developing countries could reap the benefits of globalization and liberalization. A particular point of attention for UNCTAD should be the issue of promoting opportunities for foreign direct investment in least developed countries. UNCTAD's role should in part be shaped through the organization's technical cooperation activities, aimed at preparing the ground and providing training to developing countries which would enable them to respond to the opportunities arising from the Uruguay Round. However, UNCTAD's analytical role and the opportunities which the organization provided for open and informal policy discussions were equally important. Where the ultimate goal might be to come to an international agreement on investment in the framework of WTO, analytical work and discussion on all the different dimensions of investment were required in UNCTAD and WTO. In this field, UNCTAD should make use of its comparative advantage in addressing the relationship between development and investment. As a first step, the European Union was looking forward to the forthcoming expert meeting on bilateral investment agreements.

13. The representative of **Switzerland** highlighted the importance of integrating developing countries in the multilateral trading system. Integration was not only institutional, but also involved increased participation in international trade. Greater effort to achieve such integration was still necessary. This was particularly the case for least developed countries. In order to render operational the Plan of Action for the LDCs, practical efforts would also be required by both international organizations and the countries themselves. The Plan of Action should be complemented by outlets for exports.

14. He announced that, in order to broaden market access conditions of LDCs and other developing countries, the Swiss Government had taken two measures after the Singapore Ministerial Conference. First, on 1 March 1997, it had introduced substantive changes in its generalized scheme of preferences under the GSP, which would allow duty-free access to least developed countries' exports of industrial products and most agricultural products. Moreover, it had extended preferential access conditions to agricultural exports of other developing countries. The second measure taken related to the establishment of two trust funds (of US$3 million each) in UNCTAD and in the International Trade Centre. He reiterated the importance of coordination and transparency in the technical co-operation activities of different agencies.

15. Turning to UNCTAD's activities in relation to the WTO Ministerial Declaration, he said that various issues in the Declaration required analysis by UNCTAD. The secretariat's work on investment and on competition policy was highly appreciated and should be continued. It would serve as a framework for intergovernmental discussions, including the work of the two working groups on investment and on competition established within the WTO. The participation of the private sector and civil societies in such work was most important. Regarding the High-level Meeting on LDCs, his country favoured a sharply focused approach which would achieve concrete results in order to co-ordinate assistance programmes related to foreign trade. The goal was to determine an integrated approach to the means used to reinforce institutional and human capabilities of LDCs. In 1994 Switzerland had made proposals in this regard.

16. The representative of the **Russian Federation** said that cooperation with other international organizations should be undertaken on the basis of equality and specific division of responsibilities between the relevant international organizations, with due account taken of their comparative advantages. UNCTAD should secure its role as the United Nations central organ for interrelated consideration of trade, investment, technology, services, environment and sustainable development. UNCTAD was called upon to participate substantively in the discussions on global economic issues from the development standpoint, and in so doing contributed intellectual pluralism and a healthy competition of ideas. A certain decentralization of activities within the secretariat and better coordination of country-specific programmes were also important measures which could improve cooperation.

17. Reiterating his Government's support for closer cooperation and coordination between UNCTAD and other social and economic organs of the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO, he welcomed the consistent steps taken by the Executive Heads of UNCTAD and WTO to establish productive working relations between the two organizations. In the Singapore Ministerial Declaration, several specific areas were mentioned for UNCTAD/WTO

cooperation, in particular on competition policy, environment and investment. This suggested that UNCTAD's potential in those difficult areas had been recognized, while its role as a forum for consensus-building should grow if these new issues were proposed for multilateral trade negotiations. Finally, he favoured the idea of conducting reviews of UNCTAD's cooperation with other international organizations on a periodic basis.

18. The representative of **Haiti** strongly supported the recommendations made by European Union and Switzerland concerning the importance of achieving tangible results at the High-level Meeting for the LDCs. UNCTAD's assistance was required to ensure the consideration of the development dimension, coherence of policy advice and promotion of intelligent interdependence. To this end, UNCTAD should assist LDC delegations in their preparations for the Meeting, in particular by making, well before the Meeting, a study on the state of collaboration between the Government, the Bretton Woods institutions, the private sector and trade-related international organizations. The secretariat could synthesize these studies so that problems of coordination and collaboration would be highlighted at the Meeting. Such work would enable participants to propose solutions aimed at a more coherent collaboration. He suggested that UNIDO be associated with the High-level Meeting, given its experience in the area of industrial policy and small and medium-sized enterprises.

19. The representative of **Bangladesh** welcomed the increased cooperation between UNCTAD and the WTO. With reference to the forthcoming High-level Meeting for LDCs, he expressed his satisfaction that UNCTAD was fully involved in the preparation, holding and follow-up of the Meeting. The agenda of the Meeting should be focused, to ensure that the Meeting resulted in a tangible, measurable and achievable outcome within a specified time frame. There seemed to be a growing consensus that the Meeting would deal with market access and with removal of supply-side constraints, so that the development potential of LDCs would be unlocked. The draft agenda should be prepared expeditiously, to allow proper preparations for the Meeting. It was important to maintain the momentum and, in this context, he welcomed the recent initiatives to visit the Bretton Woods institutions in order to identify in which way these institutions could make a real input in the preparations and in the Meeting itself. Some delegations feared that they had not been given sufficient time to contribute to the plan of action. He noted, however, that this was the beginning of a series of measures, and countries could contribute to increased market access for the LDCs at a later stage. Finally, he thanked Switzerland for its contribution to activities in favour of the LDCs.

20. The spokesman for the **African Group** (Morocco) recalled that UNCTAD had a mandate to maximize the positive effects of globalization and liberalization by helping developing countries and particularly the LDCs to integrate into the international trading system. UNCTAD should also help these countries to understand the multilateral trading system by analysing international trade and the new issues in a development perspective. For this purpose, cooperation between UNCTAD and WTO on trade and development was essential. UNCTAD was also among the key institutions in the organization and follow-up of the results of the High-level Meeting on LDCs. Given its mandate and experience in this field, UNCTAD would contribute effectively to achieving a better integration of the means to be mobilized in order to help LDCs reap the benefits of foreign trade and integrate into the international trading system.

21. He hailed UNCTAD's analytical work in the fields of trade and investment, trade and competition and trade facilitation, which would serve as a basis for an informal discussion on these issues in the WTO. As for cooperation between UNCTAD and WTO, the aim would be to ensure that the development dimension was duly taken into consideration. He added that UNCTAD could make a useful contribution, from a development perspective, to increasing transparency of public procurement and to helping developing countries understand different aspects of this question.

22. Referring to the International Technology Agreement, he felt that there was a danger that the process of liberalization in trade in information technology products would marginalize developing countries, particularly the African ones. He urged UNCTAD to make an analysis that would clarify this question and would help these countries avoid the risk of marginalization.

23. The representative of **Madagascar** thanked Switzerland for its concrete steps to assist LDCs through market access and technical cooperation activities. On the High-level Meeting for LDCs, he referred to the informal note addressed by Madagascar to the three secretariats involved in the organization of the Meeting. It was of the utmost importance to promote opportunities for FDI in LDCs. To create synergies, it was important to establish a linkage between the Pilot Seminar on investment in LDCs and the High-level Meeting. If the objective of the Meeting was to adopt immediately applicable concrete measures in favour of LDCs, there was an urgent need to state explicitly the needs of the LDCs, so that there would be a correspondence between supply and demand. He reiterated his request to the three secretariats concerned to facilitate the statement of the needs of LDCs in the form of a memorandum.

24. The spokesman for the **Latin American and Caribbean Group** (Jamaica) argued that the Singapore Ministerial Declaration had few serious implications for the current work programme of UNCTAD, since this programme was determined by UNCTAD IX and the subsequent decisions of the Trade and Development Board and the Commissions. These decisions included work on the Uruguay Round agreements. In respect of the WTO/UNCTAD/ITC-organized High-level Meeting on LDCs, a schedule of activities leading to the convening of the Meeting should be prepared and circulated as soon as possible.

25. Finally, he expressed the view that the discussions in the executive session of the Board did not reflect the focus on executive-type matters that was expected of it.

26. The representative of **Cuba** stressed the need of developing countries to receive UNCTAD's technical inputs from a development perspective, which would allow them to be better prepared for future international trade negotiations, particularly those in the context of the WTO. He welcomed co-operation between UNCTAD and the WTO, but insisted that such cooperation should preserve UNCTAD'S space, priorities and independence, so that it did not become subordinated to the WTO. UNCTAD should in fact have a proactive attitude, without waiting for developments in WTO's work.

27. The representative of **Peru** said that the most important point in cooperation between UNCTAD and the WTO was to ensure that the development dimension was taken into account, particularly in the discussions on investment and competition. UNCTAD should participate formally as an observer

in the WTO working groups on these issues. The dates of the meetings of the WTO working groups should be coordinated with those of expert meetings convened by UNCTAD, to enable both sets of meetings to benefit from the presence of experts from capitals. The two agencies could also sponsor a joint seminar along the lines of Divonne III, so as to render explicit the synergy and harmony between them. The reports prepared by UNCTAD on investment and competition, including the three reports to be drawn up by future UNCTAD expert meetings, should be submitted to the WTO working groups, as well as a list of publications that UNCTAD had previously issued on these subjects.

28. The representative of **Canada** said that, with regard to the work of the WTO working groups on the relationship between trade and investment, and on issues relating to the interaction between trade and competition policy, UNCTAD possessed a relevant high-level analytical capacity and could therefore maintain its role of a consensus-builder on these issues. Cooperation between UNCTAD and the WTO could be further enhanced, but it should be kept in mind that the two institutions were autonomous. Concerning the High-level Meeting on LDCs, he emphasized that the LDCs required far more extensive technical assistance, especially as regards capacity-building, in order to benefit fully from the results of the Uruguay Round Agreements. As for the agenda of the High-level Meeting, he argued that the agenda should not be expanded beyond what had been agreed upon. He also pointed out that dates for the Meeting had not yet been agreed. Finally, he trusted that the IMF and the World Bank would be involved in the preparation of this Meeting.

29. The representative of **Uganda**, referring to the High-level Meeting on LDCs, said that tangible and measurable results should include the important issue of market access. These trade-related actions needed to be developed within an integrated policy framework, and he therefore appreciated the moves to engage full participation by the World Bank and IMF in the High-Level Meeting. A positive step in this direction was the envisaged mission to Washington by the Chairman of the WTO Committee on Trade and Development and the Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on LDCs. He supported the interventions calling for UNCTAD to assist LDCs in their preparations for the High-level Meeting and believed that UNCTAD should also assist LDCs with preparations for negotiations in the WTO on the new trade issues arising from the Singapore Ministerial Declaration.

30. The representative of **Zimbabwe** observed that the High-level Meeting for LDCs was a significant step, but still only a segment in the wider and larger processes of implementing the WTO Plan of Action for the LDCs. UNCTAD should be rightfully and actively involved in this initiative, and in promoting the implementation of the Plan of Action in general. The LDCs in particular must be fully involved in the preparatory process for the High-level Meeting, including the large number of them that were not represented in Geneva. Regarding the effects on UNCTAD's work programme of the WTO Ministerial Conference, he argued that UNCTAD's current work programme on the Uruguay Round Agreements was governed by the various decisions of UNCTAD's policy organs at their previous sessions, as well as the Midrand Declaration adopted by UNCTAD IX. He sought clarification whether, in the light of all this, the Board needed to take a new decision to mandate UNCTAD to work on the new issues emerging from the WTO Ministerial Conference, or whether the existing mandates were sufficient for this purpose.

31. The representative of **Japan**, referring to the comprehensive and integrated WTO Plan of Action for the Least Developed Countries, said that marketing assistance to LDCs should be examined as one of the agenda items in the context of technical assistance in the High-level Meeting on LDCs. There was also a need to examine at that Meeting successful cases of foreign direct investments to the LDCs by the developed countries and more advanced developing countries. The participation of representatives of the private sector in the Meeting was of particular importance for the purposes of the above-mention examination.

32. The representative of **Nepal** said that LDCs had not benefited from globalization and liberalization, nor from the results of the Uruguay Round. This weak link in the multilateral trading system needed to be addressed. The WTO Singapore Ministerial Declaration and the Plan of Action for LDCs manifested an emerging political will to enhance the participation of LDCs in the multilateral trading system, as reflected in the convening of the High-level Meeting for LDCs. The High-level Meeting should be so devised as to respond to the Singapore Ministerial Declaration. In this respect, two points were worth mentioning. First, there should be closer cooperation between the three co-organizers (UNCTAD, WTO, ITC) in preparing the High-level Meeting. He expressed appreciation for the Informal Note on the High-Level Meeting for LDCs prepared by the three organizations, the emphasis of which was appropriately placed on enhancing market access for LDCs. But the removal of supply-side constraints in LDCs were equally important to enable the LDCs to take advantage of the new market access opportunities. Both problems must be addressed by the High-level Meeting. It was thus necessary to address measures related to such issues as investment, competitiveness and diversification, and not just technical assistance matters. Secondly, the inputs of LDCs themselves to the preparatory process were important to ensure a well-prepared Meeting that would achieve concrete results. The efforts made so far in this direction were encouraging. Finally, he expressed the wish to see the High-level Meeting convened as soon as possible.

33. Responding to the point for clarification raised by the representative of Zimbabwe, the **Secretary-General of UNCTAD** stated that the UNCTAD secretariat was not limited by the decisions of the WTO Singapore Ministerial Declaration when it came to UNCTAD's own autonomous work programme. That applied not only to investment and competition, but also to the LDCs. In the case of the LDCs, the UNCTAD secretariat had been discussing a specific initiative that had come from WTO, namely that of holding the High-level Meeting on the LDCs to address one among many issues that were important to the LDCs, i.e. how to increase market access, in terms of a concrete proposal made some time ago by the Director-General of WTO. That was why, in this case, UNCTAD was seeking to work in close coordination with WTO, but this did not mean that UNCTAD would not pursue its own programme on the LDCs, not only related to trade but also to other matters as well.

Action by the Board

34. The Board took note of the statements and comments made on this item and agreed that they would be fully reflected in the final report on the fourteenth executive session.

Chapter II

COORDINATION AND COOPERATION BETWEEN UNCTAD AND RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

(Agenda item 3)

35. For its consideration of this item, the Board had before it the following documentation:

> "UNCTAD's cooperation with international organizations in the fields of trade and development" - Note by the UNCTAD secretariat (TD/B/EX(14)/2 and Corr.1)

36. The **Chief of the Inter-Organizational Affairs and Technical Cooperation Service** said that the focus of the secretariat note was on those international organizations with which UNCTAD was cooperating actively. The Secretary-General of UNCTAD had taken the lead in establishing formal ties with a number of relevant institutions. Examples of such ties included in particular the Agreement with the WTO, the Joint Communiqué between the Secretary-General of UNCTAD and the Director-General of UNIDO, and the Joint ITC/UNCTAD/WTO programme of assistance to African countries in the follow-up to the Uruguay Round. Efforts in the same direction were being undertaken with the Bretton Woods institutions, UNDP, UNEP, and the United Nations Regional Commissions, to mention only a few.

37. The multi-faceted nature of the work programme of UNCTAD, which was the focal point in the United Nations for the integrated treatment of development and interrelated issues in the areas of trade, finance, investment, technology, services and sustainable development, made cooperation with other organizations essential to the effective functioning of UNCTAD itself. The challenge for UNCTAD was to demonstrate where its comparative advantage lay and to focus on those activities where its contribution could be most effective, while seeking synergies and making joint collaborative efforts to further strengthen its contribution to trade and development issues. The challenge entailed efforts at identifying and focusing on common priority objectives and priority themes; developing joint arrangements to respond to emerging requirements; and concerting overall policies and strategies. An example was provided by the High-level Meeting on Integrated Initiatives for Least Developed Countries' Trade Development which the WTO Ministerial Conference had agreed should be organized jointly by ITC, UNCTAD and WTO.

38. The search for complementarities and synergies, however, should not restrict the scope for independent thinking, particularly on global economic analysis, which was an important part of UNCTAD's mandate. One must distinguish between those areas where the involvement of more than one organization would mean duplication and those where, on the contrary, intellectual pluralism enriched the current international debate on economic and development issues. Improved inter-organizational coordination and consistency of action by member States were essential to ensure better system-wide action. This matter would be reviewed by ACC at its next session on 10-11 April 1997 in Geneva. Exchanges of information, facilitated by the evolution of cost-effective information technologies, were the basis for improved cooperation. However, cooperation could not rely on information alone, as it required also the willingness of both partners to be open and to

act in a spirit of reciprocation and partnership for the sake of the common system to which each organization belonged.

39. The spokeswoman for the **Asian Group and China** (Philippines) praised the very helpful paper prepared by the secretariat. Speaking on behalf of the Philippines, she regretted the failure to mention links between UNCTAD and ASEAN and APEC.

40. The representative of **Pakistan** asked the secretariat to clarify the second sentence in paragraph 21 and also the nature of the impediments to collaboration referred to in paragraph 28 of the secretariat note regarding cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions. He added that the independence of the UNCTAD secretariat should not be compromised and asked what mechanism UNCTAD envisaged for that purpose. He referred also to cooperation with WIPO and to the need for UNCTAD to contribute to the proposed treaty on data-bases and its developmental implications.

41. The representative of the **Netherlands**, speaking on behalf of the **European Union**, expressed overall satisfaction with the secretariat note on this item, which provided a good inventory of current cooperation initiatives. A clear vision of future approaches to cooperation was necessary, as was the setting of priorities that reflected work programmes and budgetary constraints. He asked how many of the arrangements listed in annex II of the note were effectively operational. He felt that the information provided in paragraph 89 on cooperation with the European Commission could be expanded. Finally, in view of the importance of the relationship with WTO, he asked what type of mechanism was envisaged to prevent the cooperative work of UNCTAD, WTO and third parties from overlapping.

42. The spokesman for the **African Group** (Morocco) welcomed the thematic approach of the secretariat note, which facilitated discussion of the issue. He felt that more information could have been given on existing coordination in the framework of the ACC, in particular with regard to the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa and the specific role of UNCTAD, and on the implementation of the Special Programme of Action in Favour of the Least Developed Countries. Greater attention should be given also to the joint ITC/UNCTAD/WTO programme of assistance to African countries in the follow-up to the Uruguay Round, to cooperation with ECA and UNDP, and to cooperation in the field of commodities, with particular focus on diversification.

43. The representative of **Norway** supported the statement made by the European Union and expressed the view that the secretariat note could have been much shorter. What was important was the quality and efficiency of the cooperative arrangements, not their quantity.

44. The spokesman for the **Latin American and Caribbean Group** (Jamaica) observed that cooperation was not an end in itself. It was supposed to improve the content of the policy dialogue, enrich the quality of UNCTAD's technical cooperation and be capable of providing performance criteria. The secretariat note needed to be read in the context of UNCTAD's overall strategy for technical cooperation, and cooperation should be pursued in particular in those areas where priorities had been defined in the work programme.

45. The representative of **Mexico** considered that more information could have been given in the note on cooperation with UNIDO and with the Economic and Social Council, in particular with respect to the work carried out in collaboration with the Commission on Sustainable Development.

46. The **Chief, Inter-Organizational Affairs and Technical Cooperation** provided clarification and further information in response to questions and comments of delegations.

Action by the Board

47. The Board took note of the report by the UNCTAD secretariat on this item (TD/B/EX(14)/2 and Corr.1) and encouraged the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to continue his efforts in improving coordination and cooperation between UNCTAD and other relevant international organizations. The Board decided that it should continue to monitor progress in this area.

Chapter III

TECHNICAL COOPERATION:

(a) STRATEGY FOR UNCTAD

(b) 1997-1999 PLAN FOR TECHNICAL COOPERATION

(Agenda item 4)

48. For its consideration of this agenda item, the Board had before it the following documents:

- "Technical cooperation" - Part I: Note by the UNCTAD secretariat (TD/B/EX(14)/3)

- "Technical cooperation" - Part II: Working sheets (TD/B/EX(14)/3/Add.1 and Corr.1)

49. The **Chief, Inter-Organizational Affairs and Technical Cooperation**, introducing the two sub-items, recalled the process of informal consultations that had led to the preparation of the draft strategy document and the main principles that lay behind it. It was the secretariat's understanding that the text was acceptable to all regional groups. He also explained the manner in which the 1997-1999 plan had been prepared, the summary tables being derived from the more detailed information presented in the working sheets. On the basis of project information, UNCTAD's technical cooperation delivery would be expected to be of the order of $24-25 million. Finally, he drew attention to some factual errors in the working sheets, which would be rectified in a corrigendum.

50. The spokesman for the **Latin American and Caribbean Group** (Jamaica) stated that his group could go along with the strategy. He suggested that it would be helpful if triangular cooperation were reflected in the worksheets for the plan and felt that the plan itself should indicate cooperation with other agencies and organizations. He noted that the Latin American and Caribbean Group was receiving the smallest share of technical cooperation among regional groups.

51. The representative of **Ethiopia** said that his delegation agreed with the proposed strategy. Referring to the work sheets, he observed that the amount proposed and approved for Investment, Technology and Innovation Policy reviews in Ethiopia appeared to be underestimated. He noted that some programmes, including that on commodities and natural resources, had made no proposals for LDCs. Finally, he recalled that Ethiopia had offered to become a regional centre for TRAINFORTRADE and he enquired whether this was reflected in the plan.

52. The spokesman for the **African Group** (Morocco) also praised the secretariat for the strategy, the implementation of which was crucially dependent on the availability of resources. Concerning the plan, he noted that for Africa the balance between regional and national projects was skewed in favour of the former, and he recommended a greater country focus in line with the strategy.

53. The representative of the **Netherlands**, speaking on behalf of the **European Union**, said that he saw no difficulty with the strategy. However, in view of the late availability of the document, the Board might wish to consider adopting it *ad referendum*. He enquired whether the evaluations foreseen in paragraph 18 of the strategy were in fact taking place, and requested information on the single secretariat entity on internal coordination mentioned in paragraph 22. Concerning the plan, he urged that the plan should clearly indicate how it fitted in with the strategy. The plan should not consist simply of a list of projects, and it should indicate not only what was envisaged for 1997 but also the projections for the two succeeding years. It would be helpful if the working sheets were to give information on starting dates and total project budgets.

54. The representative of **Norway** said that the secretariat had made a brave and commendable effort in preparing the plan. It would be useful, particularly for donors when they considered funding, if the secretariat could prepare a brief fact sheet on each programme, including the objective and the time frame.

55. The spokeswoman for the **Asian Group and China** (Philippines) stated that the strategy was acceptable to her Group, but that it should be approved *ad referendum*. She noted that the Asian and Pacific region would have an increased share of technical cooperation activities in 1997, but was concerned at the apparent decrease for subsequent years. In view of the fact that there would be insufficient resources to carry out the proposed projects, she asked what formula would be used to allocate resources.

56. The representative of **Switzerland** expressed support for the strategy and plan. He recommended that there should be greater focus in the plan on country projects and that priorities should be established among programmes. In project design and execution it was important to have quality standards. There should be a basic level of core resources allocated to technical cooperation, so as not to make the programme less dependent on extra-budgetary funding.

57. The representative of the **Russian Federation** praised the secretariat's document on the technical cooperation activities, in particular the balanced approach it took *vis-à-vis* the economies in transition.

58. In response to the statements made, the **Chief, Inter-Organizational Affairs and Technical Cooperation** said that the various suggestions made would be taken into account by the secretariat. Several of the specific questions raised would be followed up bilaterally. The discussion that had just taken place was viewed as part of the on-going process of dialogue between delegations and the secretariat.

Action by the Board

59. The Board noted the progress in developing the technical cooperation strategy and requested the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to continue his consultations with a view to enabling the Board to adopt the strategy formally at its fifteenth executive session in June 1997.

60. The Board also took note of the 1997-1999 plan for technical cooperation and the comments made thereon by delegations, and requested the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to take these comments into account in the implementation of the plan.

Chapter IV

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE SECRETARIAT TASK FORCE ON PUBLICATIONS POLICY

(Agenda item 5)

61. For its consideration of this agenda item, the Board had before it the speaking notes of the Chairman of the secretariat Task Force on Publications Policy.

62. The **President** recalled that the Board had discussed the issue of publications policy at its forty-third session on the basis of conference room paper TD/B/43/CRP.4 and had endorsed the approach set out therein whereby a secretariat Task Force would report to the Secretary-General of UNCTAD and the latter would subsequently report to the Board.

63. The **Chief of Programme, Planning and Assessment**, speaking in his capacity as Chairman of the secretariat Task Force on Publications Policy, said that the Task Force would complete its report by the end of March 1997, on schedule. In terms of methodology, the Task Force had reviewed all the relevant United Nations administrative provisions and held discussions with UNCTAD staff and the relevant services in the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG), as well as at United Nations Headquarters in New York. In addition, there had been a meeting on 27 February 1997 with the regional group coordinators.

64. The report of the Task Force would explain the role of publications in UNCTAD and make recommendations relating to each of the areas constituting the elements of a publications policy. In that connection, it should be noted that UNCTAD's publications programme had been rationalized immediately after UNCTAD IX, and the proposed 1998-1999 work programme reflected a 15 per cent reduction in the volume of publications in relation to the pre-Midrand work programme. The detailed recommendations in the Task Force's report would concern, among other things: the creation of a mechanism in the secretariat to assume overall responsibility for overseeing the effective implementation of UNCTAD's publication policy; an improved planning process for the preparation of the publications programme within the framework of the proposed programme budget; planning of documentation for intergovernmental meetings; a collegial approach within the secretariat to the planning, production and clearance of UNCTAD's major reports; guidelines for parliamentary documentation; editing, translation and printing; technical innovation; sales, pricing, marketing and co-publishing; and assessment of publications and feedback.

65. The representative of the **Netherlands**, speaking on behalf of the **European Union**, said that it would have been useful to have the speaking notes well in advance of the session. Once the Secretary-General of UNCTAD had received the report of the secretariat Task Force, the next step would be for him to report to the Board and thus enable member States to give their views on UNCTAD's future publications policy. He observed, however, that the issue

of publications did not appear on the draft provisional agendas for the Board's fifteenth special session or its forty-fourth session.

66. The representative of **Ethiopia** said that, if it were to be proposed that greater use should be made of Internet for the dissemination of UNCTAD documentation, a cost would be transferred from UNCTAD to developing countries. He therefore suggested that the resulting savings to UNCTAD should be reported, and the corresponding resources should be allocated to the Trust Fund for LDCs.

67. The **Secretary of the Trade and Development Board** confirmed that the Secretary-General of UNCTAD would report to the Board, at a time to be determined. In the meantime, the issue of publications could be taken up at the monthly consultations of the President of the Trade and Development Board in order to allow a fuller exchange of views on the matter than had been possible at the executive session.

Action by the Board

68. The Board took note of the oral report by the Chairman of the secretariat Task Force, as reflected in his speaking notes, and requested the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to proceed with the completion of his own report on UNCTAD's publications policy. The Board further agreed that this item would be taken up at the monthly consultations of the President scheduled for 30 April 1997.

Chapter V

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT ON HIS CONSULTATIONS DESIGNED TO IMPROVE THE WAY THE BOARD ADDRESSES THE ISSUE OF INTERDEPENDENCE, INCLUDING LDCs AND UN-NADAF

(Agenda item 6)

and

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FORTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE BOARD

(Agenda item 7)

69. For its consideration of these agenda items, the Board had before it the following draft provisional agendas, circulated to the meeting in English only:

- Draft provisional agenda for the forty-fourth session of the Board (13-24 October 1997) and tentative schedule of in-session meetings

- Draft provisional agenda for the fifteenth executive session of the Board (20 June 1997).

70. The **President** recalled that the Board, at its forty-third session, had invited him to conduct informal consultations designed to improve the way the Board addressed the item on interdependence. At the monthly consultations of the President on 31 January 1997, it had been decided to extend the coverage of the report of the President to include the item of the Board on UN-NADAF and LDCs. Moreover, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD had addressed a communication to all heads of permanent missions in Geneva setting out his personal reflections on the functioning of the intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD. The Secretary-General had received considerable responses to those reflections.

71. For his part, the President said he had discussed with the Secretary-General and his staff, on several occasions, ideas aimed at improving the functioning of the machinery and the manner in which the Board could address these subjects. They had sought to design the agendas and the organization of work of the Board in such a manner as to improve the focus of the main agenda items on interdependence, LDCs and Africa, as well as to improve the quality of the panellists and to reduce their number in order to give greater opportunity for delegations to discuss these substantive issues. The aim was to ensure that each of these items made a contribution to the high-level segment and that, when discussions were taking place in the Board, no parallel meetings should detract from participation in each of these items. Thus, the design aimed at improving efficiency, sharpening the focus and improving the quality of the substantive debate. Therefore, the provisional agenda of the forty-fourth regular session of the Board would focus on the main substantive issues as designated in Midrand, while other procedural matters normally dealt with at the regular session had been allocated to the agenda of the fifteenth executive session to be held in June 1997, thus considerably freeing the regular session of the Board to focus on the main substantive items and the high-level segment.

72. The **Secretary-General of UNCTAD** said that, following the experience of the forty-third session of the Board, there had been consultations with delegations on how to make the forty-fourth session as businesslike and profitable as possible. One general conclusion to emerge was that, in future, preparations for the Board session as a whole and for each particular segment should be undertaken in close consultation and cooperation with the member countries. Such consultations would seek to so organize the meetings on the high-level segment and the other main issues (interdependence, LDCs and UN-NADAF) as to avoid overlap and interference.

73. Turning to the topic proposed for the high-level segment of the forty-fourth session of the Board - namely "Globalization, competition, competitiveness and development" - he outlined the economic thinking that had led to the proposal of this topic. He observed that the high-level segment would consider the issues raised through a comparative examination of successful development experiences. In particular, the following questions would be examined:

(a) What had been the role of exposure to competition in the development of competitiveness in developing countries that presented successful development experiences? Was there a need for policies for the promotion of competitiveness in supplementing the efficiency-creating effects of exposure to competition?

(b) Had there been conflicts between the promotion of competition and the attainment of other development objectives, including economic, social and cultural objectives? If so, how had they been dealt with? What had been the impact on competitiveness?

(c) How had globalization affected competition in world markets? What new concerns had been raised? What was the current thinking on how to address them?

(d) Had the risk of marginalization been increased by the changes in competitiveness brought about by globalization? If so, what policies could be devised in response?

74. He made it clear that these ideas were preliminary. He looked forward to frequent informal consultations between now and the fifteenth executive session of the Board in June 1997 on how to give concrete shape to the high-level segment on the basis of these or other ideas which delegations might put forward.

75. The spokeswoman for the **Latin American and Caribbean Group** (Jamaica) requested that an item on the financing of developing-country experts participating in UNCTAD meetings be placed on the agenda of the forty-fourth session of the Board. She recalled that, at the forty-third session, it had been agreed that this issue should be taken up again at the next regular session of the Board. Her Group had noted that this item was not on the provisional agenda for the forty-fourth session and therefore wished to request its inclusion so that the Board would be able to take note of what action had been taken on the trust fund for this purpose.

76. The representative of **The Netherlands**, speaking on behalf of the **European Union**, welcomed the ideas for a more focused and efficient treatment of interdependence, LDCs and UN-NADAF. He urged the secretariat, however, to limit the number of panellists invited to participate in the regular session. However useful, the expert panels must not be allowed to take up too much time at plenary sessions of the Board where the aim was to hold political discussions at the intergovernmental level. In general, it was a good idea to move the discussions on interdependence, LDCs and UN-NADAF in the direction of the high-level segment, since this would give greater coherence to the Board session and the high-level segment would cease to be an isolated event.

77. Regarding the Secretary-General's proposals for the high-level segment, he noted that this was the first time these ideas had been aired in a formal setting and that there was still much to be said on the substance proposed. At the forty-third session last year the high-level topic had been insufficiently focused. The phrasing suggested for the high-level topic for the forty-fourth session, together with the proposal to feed in the outcome on several other substantive issues, meant that lack of focus remained a serious threat. He therefore argued that the topics - both for the high-level segment and for the interdependence item - should be approved in final form at the fifteenth executive session in June and that they should be subject to consultations in the meantime.

78. The representative of **Nepal** said that, with regard to the issue of competitiveness, it would be essential in selecting the case studies for analytical purposes to consider the various inherent reasons why some countries were more competitive than others. Thus it was necessary to take account of the geographical element. As a landlocked country, for example, Nepal had always maintained the view that its very geography rendered it less competitive in many senses.

79. The spokesman for the **African Group** (Morocco) expressed his Group's appreciation for the President's oral report on item 6, in particular as it related to the integrated treatment of such issues as interdependence, LDCs and UN-NADAF. He was pleased to note the efforts made to raise the level of participation in dealing with the LDC and UN-NADAF items by eschewing parallel activities at the forty-fourth session which had hampered the proper consideration of these matters at the forty-third session in 1996. He also welcomed the attempt to integrate these three items into the work done at the high-level segment. Nevertheless, he felt that the UN-NADAF item still needed to be more sharply focused on specific issues in order to highlight those areas which called for special measures. As for the LDC item, his Group considered that it would be useful to have a third subparagraph relating to the follow-up work arising from the WTO/UNCTAD/ITC High-level Meeting for LDCs in June 1997.

80. Turning to the provisional agenda for the forty-fourth session (item 7), he recalled that the African Group had twice proposed the inclusion of cross-sectoral issues in the Board's agenda. It was his understanding that no delegation or regional group had opposed this proposal. The African Group therefore questioned the manner in which these cross-sectoral issues were being dealt with following the decision taken at UNCTAD IX, as reflected in paragraph 106 of the Midrand final document, which stated that cross-sectoral issues should be integrated into the work of the intergovernmental machinery.

81. With regard to the schedule proposed for the forty-fourth session of the Board, his Group had noted with concern that the forty-fourth session would have only eight and a half days at its disposal, contrary to the provision adopted at UNCTAD IX that the regular sessions should last for 10 days.

82. Finally, he said that the African Group supported in general the theme proposed for the high-level segment of the forty-fourth session, but hoped that the issues might be more precisely targeted through further consultations. He also wished to see the outcome of the high-level segment recorded, in one form or another.

83. The representative of the **United States of America** agreed with the European Union view that further intense consultations would be needed on the Secretary-General's proposals on topics for the high-level segment, to make sure the topics were dealt with in a way that would yield the most benefit for member States in developing their own national policies. In this connection, he recalled that the Midrand final document referred specifically to issues related to competition law, as opposed to competition policy, and the United States had long believed that the former was the more appropriate aspect for UNCTAD to focus on.

84. As for the proposal to add to the agenda of the forty-fourth session the item on the expert funding issue and the related trust fund, he observed that the President's consultations on this issue had already come a long way towards reaching agreement on at least a trial *modus operandi* for a trust fund. He felt that the delegations and regional groups were now so close to an agreement which would allow the Secretary-General to go forward that they should pursue their consultations single-mindedly. Having reached agreement at the level of the consultations, the participants could then consider the best way to take up further deliberations on this topic, be it at the fifteenth executive session in June or at the forty-fourth session in October. He therefore hoped that the Board would defer placing this issue on any specific agenda for the time being.

85. The representative of **India** shared the view that fewer panellists should be invited to participate in the Board's regular session. Last year the panellists' contributions had been rushed and there had not been adequate time for further exchanges with delegations. Panellists, and member States for that matter, should make less formal presentations and avoid long written statements. It was essential, moreover, that a summary report should be prepared on the presentations by panellists to enable national capitals to benefit from their expertise and to assist delegations that might not have been able to attend the whole high-level segment.

86. Regarding the theme for the high-level segment, his delegation would like to see more discussion on policy matters - both global and national - as opposed to the focus on national experiences. Useful as they might be, national experiences were often exclusive to the countries concerned and could not always be replicated.

87. The spokeswoman for the **Asian Group and China** (Philippines) sought clarification on why "competitiveness" had been included in the topic for the high-level segment, when this term had not appeared in an earlier draft. She noted that it would still be possible to hold serious consultations on the theme as presented by the Secretary-General.

88. The Asian Group and China supported the two provisional agendas presented by the Secretary-General, and the proposed date for the high-level segment (23 October 1997) was also acceptable. In connection with the organization of work of the forty-fourth session, she noted with appreciation the awareness expressed by the Secretary-General of the differentiated levels of national development among the developing countries, i.e. the LDCs, the intermediate economies and emerging economies. Her Group hoped that UNCTAD's focus on the LDCs would not be at the expense of the development of the other developing countries.

89. The representative of **Pakistan** expressed support for the proposal that the item on financing of developing-country experts in UNCTAD meetings should be placed on the agenda for the forty-fourth session under "Other business", as mandated by the Board at its forty-third session. Even if the President's consultations did manage to agree on an arrangement for financing the participation of experts, the Board would still need to review how well the arrangement was working.

90. He echoed the concern expressed by the African Group at the shorter duration envisaged for the forty-fourth session of the Board and he sought clarification on why this had happened.

91. Finally, he expressed the view that the informal consultations on the high-level segment should seek to clarify how the interdependence item would be related to the topic for the high-level segment, in order to avoid a meandering approach to the high-level segment.

92. The representative of **Chile** agreed that the item on the financing of experts should be included in the agenda for the forty-fourth session. Even if the President's consultations were successful, the Board could still review the matter. Furthermore, referring to subparagraph 3(e) of Board agreed conclusions 438 (XLIII), in which the Board had requested the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to report to it as soon as possible on the Midrand decision concerning reallocation of a part of the savings resulting from the improved overall cost-effectiveness of UNCTAD, he asked when the secretariat intended to present the report in question.

93. The representative of the **Russian Federation**, referring to the provisional agenda for the forty-fourth session of the Board, expressed support for focusing the session on a few substantive items and considered that the proposal to place the high-level segment at the end of the session was rational. The proposed topic of the high-level segment was of a high interest to his Government, since the system of government regulation of competition in his country was only now developing after many years of intense monopolization under the Soviet economy. In this context, he regretted that an important technical assistance project for the Russian Federation and other CIS countries on development and protection of free competition had not been followed up by the secretariat for more than one year. He suggested that more specific themes could be included for consideration at the high-level segment, namely "Conditions of application of competition legislation to monopolies and enterprises having special or exclusive rights" and "Tasks of competition agencies in ensuring effective competitive markets". Finally, he felt it was important that the high-level segment's work should result in a separate sessional record.

94. Responding to the point raised by the representative of Chile, the **Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD** said that the formal proposals that would be made by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, through the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to the General Assembly would probably be the subject of supplements to the budget. The Budget Division did not consider that it could incorporate this issue in the present budget that was about to be finalized. There appeared still to be some uncertainty in New York as to the exact sequence of events, and in particular whether the Secretary-General of UNCTAD was entitled to share his views with the Board before transmitting them to Headquarters. However, the secretariat intended to give some form of progress report to the next monthly consultations on its own thinking about the matter. The secretariat was still assuming that it would be producing a proposal which would be discussed with the members of the Board and then, on the strength of the recommendations given by the Board, finalized *vis-à-vis* New York.

Action by the Board

95. The Board approved the theme of the high-level segment of its forty-fourth session (i.e. "Globalization, competition, competitiveness and development") and the date of the high-level segment, i.e. 23 October 1997. The Board also took note of the design of the forty-fourth session as circulated in the tabulation by the secretariat. Furthermore, the Board took note of the statement by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD concerning his intention to hold consultations with delegations on focusing the theme of the high-level segment as the substantive preparations of the secretariat began, and to report his thinking to the Board.

96. The Board further noted that the President intended to continue his consultations on item 6 and that, at the next monthly consultations of the President on 30 April 1997, there would also be an opportunity to discuss detailed proposals by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD on the organization of the events connected with the high-level segment.

97. The Board took note of the President's statement that his consultations on the establishment of a trust fund to enhance the participation of developing countries' experts in UNCTAD meetings were progressing well, that he intended to report fully on the outcome at the next round of monthly consultations and that he was keeping in mind that this matter may be placed on the agenda of the Board as mandated by the decision of the Board without prejudice to an early successful conclusion of agreement on this item.

98. Finally, the Board approved the draft provisional agendas for its fifteenth executive session and its forty-fourth regular session. 1/

1/ For the provisional agendas, see annexes II and III.

Chapter VI

OTHER BUSINESS

(Agenda item 8)

(a) Progress in the reorganization of the UNCTAD secretariat

99. The **Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD** recalled that, on 24 February 1997, a document was distributed to all delegations entitled "UNCTAD Divisions, Structure, Areas of Work and Work Assignments". While that document gave fairly detailed information on the current structure and staff assignments of the secretariat, it was not a formal organigramme because (i) it did not refer to branches, sections or units, (ii) it had not been approved by the Department of Administration and Management in New York, and (iii) staff had not been formally placed against posts, which could only be done after the organigramme had been formalized. However, the secretariat had used that structure as a basis for requesting the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management of the United Nations to approve the basic divisional structure and the structure of the "second layer" (branches) with a view to being able to resume the recruitment process, particularly at the level of the vacant D.2, D.1 and P.5 posts. The response of the Under-Secretary-General had been very positive and it seemed likely that in the near future the secretariat would get an agreement to the basic structure in terms of divisions and branches, and hence the green light to announce the above-mentioned vacancies. For the rest, he was hoping that UNCTAD would not be called upon to establish in detail sections or units in order to retain some organizational flexibility. In fact, below the level of branches the secretariat would like to operate either with teams or with task forces. They would still have Chiefs, who would be identified in the organigramme, but the idea was that the secretariat would be able to make changes at this level in order to respond swiftly to the orientations given by UNCTAD's intergovernmental bodies, without having to refer every time to New York for a change in the organization manual and in the job descriptions. The response to these proposals appeared also to be positive.

100. As for 1998-1999, the programme budget was now being finalized and would again be based on the structure of subprogrammes and Divisions of which the Working Party had been apprised. UNCTAD was making a substantial effort to contribute to the overall streamlining of the United Nations Organization, and would be proposing a reduction of the order of 12 per cent in terms of number of posts.

101. In general, Headquarters felt that the reform process in UNCTAD was going well and it was in fact being held up as a model for other parts of the system. Therefore, the current restructuring which had been proposed, or in some cases announced, in New York did not directly affect UNCTAD. Having outlined the new management and reform machinery established in New York, he said that the main point of immediate interest to UNCTAD was the attempt to rationalize the production of the Organization's flagship reports - i.e. the Trade and Development Report (UNCTAD), the World Investment Report (UNCTAD), the World Economic and Social Survey (DESIPA) and the Human Development Report (UNDP). The idea was not to merge these reports but rather to find ways in which their complementarity could be made more synergetic. To that end, these

reports would be subject to a review by WIDER for the economics side and by UNRISD for the social side.

102. The representatives of **Morocco** (on behalf of the African Group), **Egypt**, **Pakistan**, **Cuba**, **Saudi Arabia**, **Algeria**, **China** and **Uganda** expressed profound concern that the Unit for Assistance to the Palestinian People was not included in the secretariat's organizational document. The situation in the Palestinian territory needed special treatment and they therefore called for this Unit to be re-established in the near future.

Action by the Board

103. The Board took note of the statement by the Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD on the progress in the reorganization of the UNCTAD secretariat.

(b) Membership of the Working Party 1997

Action by the Board

104. The Board took note that the 19 members of the Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and the Programme Budget for 1997, as designated by the regional groups, were as follows:

> Australia; Argentina; Bulgaria; Chile; China; Ethiopia; Germany; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Mexico; Morocco; Norway; Philippines; Poland; Russian Federation; South Africa; Sri Lanka; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; and the United States of America.

105. The Board also noted that the dates scheduled in the calendar of meetings for the second part of the twenty-ninth session of the Working Party (i.e. 14-16 April 1997) had been changed to 21-23 May 1997.

Chapter VII

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

A. Opening of the session

106. The fourteenth executive session of the Trade and Development Board was opened on 24 March 1997 by Mr. Patrick Sinyinza (Zambia), President of the Board.

B. Bureau of the fourteenth executive session

107. There being no change in the elected officers of the Bureau since the forty-third session, the Bureau of the Board at its fourteenth executive session was as follows:

President:	Mr. Patrick Sinyinza	(Zambia)
Vice-Presidents:	Mr. Anton Bebler	(Slovenia)
	Mr. Krit Garnjana-Goonchorn	(Thailand)
	Mrs. Arundhati Ghose	(India)
	Mr. Peter R. Jenkins	(United Kingdom)
	Mr. Andrei Kolossovsky	(Russian Federation)
	Mr. Alexander A. Kravetz	(El Salvador)
	Mr. Björn Skogmo	(Norway)
	Mr. Daniel L. Spiegel	(United States of America)
	Mr. Fisseha Yimer Aboye	(Ethiopia)
	Mr. Jun Yokota	(Japan)
Rapporteur:	Mrs. Violeta Fonseca de Sanabria	(Venezuela)

C. Adoption of the agenda

(Agenda item 1)

108. At its 882nd meeting, on 24 March 1997, the Board adopted the provisional agenda for its fourteenth executive session, as circulated in TD/B/EX(14)/1. (For the agenda, see annex I below).

D. Report of the Board on its fourteenth executive session

(Agenda item 9)

109. In accordance with past practice, the Board authorized the Rapporteur, under the authority of the President, to prepare the report of the Board on its fourteenth executive session.

ANNEXES

Annex I

AGENDA FOR THE FOURTEENTH EXECUTIVE SESSION */

1. Adoption of the agenda

2. Issues arising in the wake of the WTO Ministerial Conference for analysis in UNCTAD from a development perspective

3. Coordination and cooperation between UNCTAD and relevant international organizations

4. Technical cooperation:

   (a) Strategy for UNCTAD

   (b) 1997-1999 plan for technical cooperation

5. Progress report on the work of the secretariat task force on publications policy

6. Report of the President on his consultations designed to improve the way the Board addresses the issue of interdependence, including LDCs and UN-NADAF

7. Provisional agenda for the forty-fourth session of the Board

8. Other business

   - Progress in the reorganization of the UNCTAD secretariat

   - Membership of the Working Party 1997

9. Report of the Board on its fourteenth executive session.

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*/ Adopted by the Board at its 882nd meeting, on 24 March 1997.

Annex II

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIFTEENTH EXECUTIVE SESSION OF THE BOARD */

(20 June 1997)

1. Adoption of the agenda

2. Matters requiring action by the Board in follow-up to the ninth session of the Conference and arising from or related to reports and activities of its subsidiary and other bodies:

   (a) Reports of the Commissions on their first sessions

   (b) Report of the Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and the Programme Budget on its twenty-ninth session

   (c) Report of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD on preparations for a meeting with actors in development

   (d) Report of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD on the implementation of the proposals contained in Board agreed conclusions 436 (XLIII): Development in Africa

3. Other matters in the field of trade and development:

   (a) Report of the Joint Advisory Group on the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO on its thirtieth session

   (b) Report of the Joint UNCTAD/IMO Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Maritime Liens and Mortgages and Related Subjects on its ninth session

4. Institutional, organizational, administrative and related matters:

   (a) Designation of intergovernmental bodies for the purposes of rule 76 of the rules of procedure of the Board

   (b) Designation of non-governmental organizations for the purposes of rule 77 of the rules of procedure of the Board

5. Other business

6. Report of the Board on its fifteenth executive session.

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*/ For the approval by the Board of the provisional agenda, see chapter V above.

Annex III

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FORTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE BOARD */

(13 - 24 October 1997)

1. Procedural matters:

   (a) Election of officers

   (b) Adoption of the agenda and organization of the work of the session

   (c) Adoption of the report on credentials

   (d) Provisional agenda for the forty-fifth session of the Board

2. Segment for high-level participation: Globalization, competition, competitiveness and development

3. Interdependence and global economic issues from a trade and development perspective: Income distribution and growth in a global context

4. Review of progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s:

   (a) Policy reforms in agriculture and their implications for LDCs' development;

   (b) Contribution by the Board to the consideration of the General Assembly, at its fifty-second session, of holding a third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

5. UNCTAD's contribution to the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s: performance, prospects and policy issues

6. Technical cooperation activities:

   (a) Review of technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD

   (b) Consideration of other relevant reports:

      - Report on UNCTAD's assistance to the Palestinian people

7. Institutional, organizational, administrative and related matters:

   (a) Review of the calendar of meetings

   (b) Administrative and financial implications of the actions of the Board

8. Other business

9. Adoption of the report of the Board on its forty-fourth session.

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*/ For the approval by the Board of the provisional agenda, see chapter V above.

Annex IV

MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE *

1. The following States members of UNCTAD, members of the Board, were represented at the session:

Afghanistan
Algeria
Argentina
Australia
Austria
Bangladesh
Belarus
Bhutan
Brazil
Bulgaria
Canada
Chile
China
Colombia
Costa Rica
Côte d'Ivoire
Cuba
Czech Republic
Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Denmark
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Ethiopia
Finland
France
Gabon
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Haiti
Hungary
Iceland
India
Indonesia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Iraq
Ireland
Israel
Italy
Jamaica
Japan
Jordan
Kenya
Latvia
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Luxembourg
Madagascar
Malaysia
Malta
Mauritius
Mexico
Mongolia
Morocco
Myanmar
Nepal
Netherlands
Nigeria
Norway
Pakistan
Panama
Paraguay
Peru
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Qatar
Republic of Korea
Romania
Russian Federation
Saudi Arabia
Slovakia
South Africa
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sweden
Switzerland
Syrian Arab Republic
Thailand
The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey
Uganda
Ukraine
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United Republic of Tanzania
United States of America
Venezuela
Viet Nam
Yemen
Zambia
Zimbabwe

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* For the list of participants, see TD/B/EX(14)/INF.1.

2. The following members of UNCTAD, not members of the Board, were represented as observers at the session:

Brunei Darussalam
Holy See

3. United Nations Environment Programme
The International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO were represented at the session.

4. The following specialized agencies and related organization were represented at the session:

International Labour Organisation
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
International Monetary Fund
United Nations Industrial Development Organization
The World Trade Organization was also represented at the session.

5. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented at the session:

Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation
European Community
League of Arab States
Organization of African Unity
Organization of the Islamic Conference

6. The following non-governmental organizations were represented at the session:

General Category

International Chamber of Commerce
International Organization for Standardization
World Federation of United Nations Associations
World Vision International

Special Category

Consumers International

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